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ABSTRACT

Florida's urbanized rural population consists of 3 segments: persons in places under 2,500 population; persons in suburbs or open country but not on farms; and persons in other urban territory. This urbanized rural population continues to grow, despite annexation and consolidation by urban communities, and the wide disparity that once existed between urban and rural populations has all but disappeared. However, the persistent growth of the urbanized rural areas with populations oriented to urban life implies the need for more intensive and innovative social planning efforts. Future planning programs must be concerned with such goals as maintaining some equitable balance between agricultural and nonagricultural activities and between man and his environment if problems associated with population growth and density are to be avoided. (JH)

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Florida's Urbanized Rural Population: Implications For Planning

by
T. Stanton Dietrich*

The dynamic growth of urban population in the United States, referred to by some observers as "our exploding metropolises," has been characterized by "metropolitanization" on the one hand and by "suburbanization" on the other. "Metropolitanization" is the growth in the number of places with 50,000 or more inhabitants, or "central cities." Suburbanization is the movement of people into the area adjacent to central cities, sometimes called the "urban fringe." Both of these trends are noticeable in Florida, one of the most rapidly growing states in the nation. But, while Florida now has 5.5 million persons or 81 percent of its 6.8 million population classified as urban residents, there still is a large proportion who might be designated as the "urbanized rural" population. These are the people who live in places with less than 2,500 inhabitants, or in rural areas but not on farms.

With the farm population down to an almost irreducible minimum (100,000), rural people no longer can be equated with farmers. Even to talk about rural–urban differences is to talk in terms of the past. The impact of mass media, especially television, modern transportation facilities and interstate turnpikes have extended what once was felt to be an urban way-of-life to almost every area of the state. So, rather than discuss rural–urban comparisons, it appears more appropriate to analyse population growth and change in terms of size-of-place.

This is not to deny the urban character of Florida. Under current census definitions, urban population in Florida has increased at a rate of over 400 percent since 1940 and, during the past ten years, 98 percent of 1,838,000 additions to the population were classified as urban residents.

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But what do these urban data tell us? For example, do they tell where the growth has occurred? do the majority of Floridans reside in metropolitan cities? to what extent do "urban residents" reside outside urban places? is there any trend in a movement toward medium or small-sized cities?

County Population

In the first place it is rather obvious that Florida's urban population is spread unevenly throughout the state.

TABLE 1: LEADING FLORIDA COUNTIES RANKED BY 1970 PERCENT URBAN POPULATION

County	% Urban	Urban Population	Total Population
Broward	99.0	613,797	620,100
Dade	98.3	1,246,725	1,267,792
Duval	98.0	518,131	528,865
Pinellas	96.2	502,277	522,329
Palm Beach	91.2	317,909	348,753
Brevard	85.0	195,614	230,006
Escambia	84.0	172,539	205,334
Orange	83.2	286,619	344,311
Hillsborough	81.2	398,270	490,265
9 Counties	93.8	4,251,881	4,557,755
Florida	80.5	5,468,137	6,789,443
Counties' % of Florida	--	77.8	67.1

Of the 67 counties, only the nine largest urban ones attained or surpassed the state's urban percent (80%) but three of these (Broward, Dade and Duval) were almost entirely urban (98–99%). Four-fifths (78%) of the state's urban population was concentrated in these nine large counties. On the other hand, 41 counties had less than half of their populations in urban places and 15 of them had no urban population at all. In other words, simply to characterize Florida as an urban state is to overlook the possibility that many of the state's people still are not

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urban residents in the sense of living in places with at least 2,500 inhabitants.

Metropolitan Population

It is interesting to note that the proportion of Florida's population in metropolitan cities did not change at all between 1940 and 1960 (27%), and the rise to 32 percent in 1970 is directly related to the Jacksonville–Duval County consolidation which increased Jacksonville's population from 201,000 to 518,000. The fourteen metropolitan cities accounted for 32 percent of the state's total population and 40 percent of the urban population;

TABLE 2: POPULATION OF METROPOLITAN CITIES FLORIDA: 1970

City	1970	1960	1960–70 % Change
Jacksonville	518,131	201,030	163.1
Miami	334,859	291,688	14.8
Tampa	277,767	274,970	1.0
St. Petersburg	216,232	181,298	19.3
Ft. Lauderdale	139,590	83,648	66.9
Hollywood	106,873	35,237	203.3
Hialeah	102,297	66,972	52.7
Orlando	99,006	88,135	12.3
Miami Beach	87,072	63,145	37.9
Tallahassee	71,897	48,174	49.2
Gainesville	64,510	29,701	117.2
Pensacola	59,507	56,752	4.9
West Palm Beach	57,290	56,208	2.1
Clearwater	52,074	34,653	50.3
Total	2,187,105	1,511,611	44.7
Florida	6,789,443	4,591,560	37.1
Metropolitan % of Florida	32.1	32.9	

yet, less than half of them equalled or exceeded the state increase of 37 percent and five of them experienced gains of less than 15 percent.

If the population of 73 places (10,000 to 50,000) is added to that of the 14 metropolitan centers, the total of all places with populations over 10,000 would be 3,655,000 or just over half (54%) of the state's population. The growth of larger cities, considerable as it was, could not over-shadow the influence of smaller places and the urbanized rural areas.

TABLE 3: POPULATION OF URBAN PLACES ADDED IN FLORIDA: 1960–1970

Size of Place	Places			Population		
	New	Rural 1960	Total	New	Rural 1960	Total
2,500– 4,999	29	36	65	102,804	113,496	216,300
5,000– 9,999	32	6	38	212,020	51,096	263,116
10,000–24,999	13	2	15	188,641	28,269	216,910
25,000 & over	1	–	1	35,497	–	35,497
Total	75	44	119	538,962	192,861	731,823

City Population

Although cities in the 10,000–24,999 class had the greatest numerical and percentage increase (445,000–100%), the 5,000–9,999 group also had a significant growth (315,000–94%). The relatively large increase in the smaller places was due to two factors: one was the creation of a number of urban places during the 1960's and the other was the urban status achieved by towns which had fewer than 2,500 people in 1960. The 1970 census reports 75 urban places that did not exist ten years earlier. Most of these (67) are small and unincorporated, ranging in size from 2,500 to 35,000 (Kendall in Dade County). Thirteen of the new cities had populations over 10,000 but, by far, the largest numbers were in the 5,000 group (32) and the 2,500 group (29) which contributed respectively 212,000 and 103,000 of the 539,000 population added by these new urban places.

TABLE 4: POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND CHANGE BY SIZE AND PLACE FLORIDA: 1940, 1960 and 1970

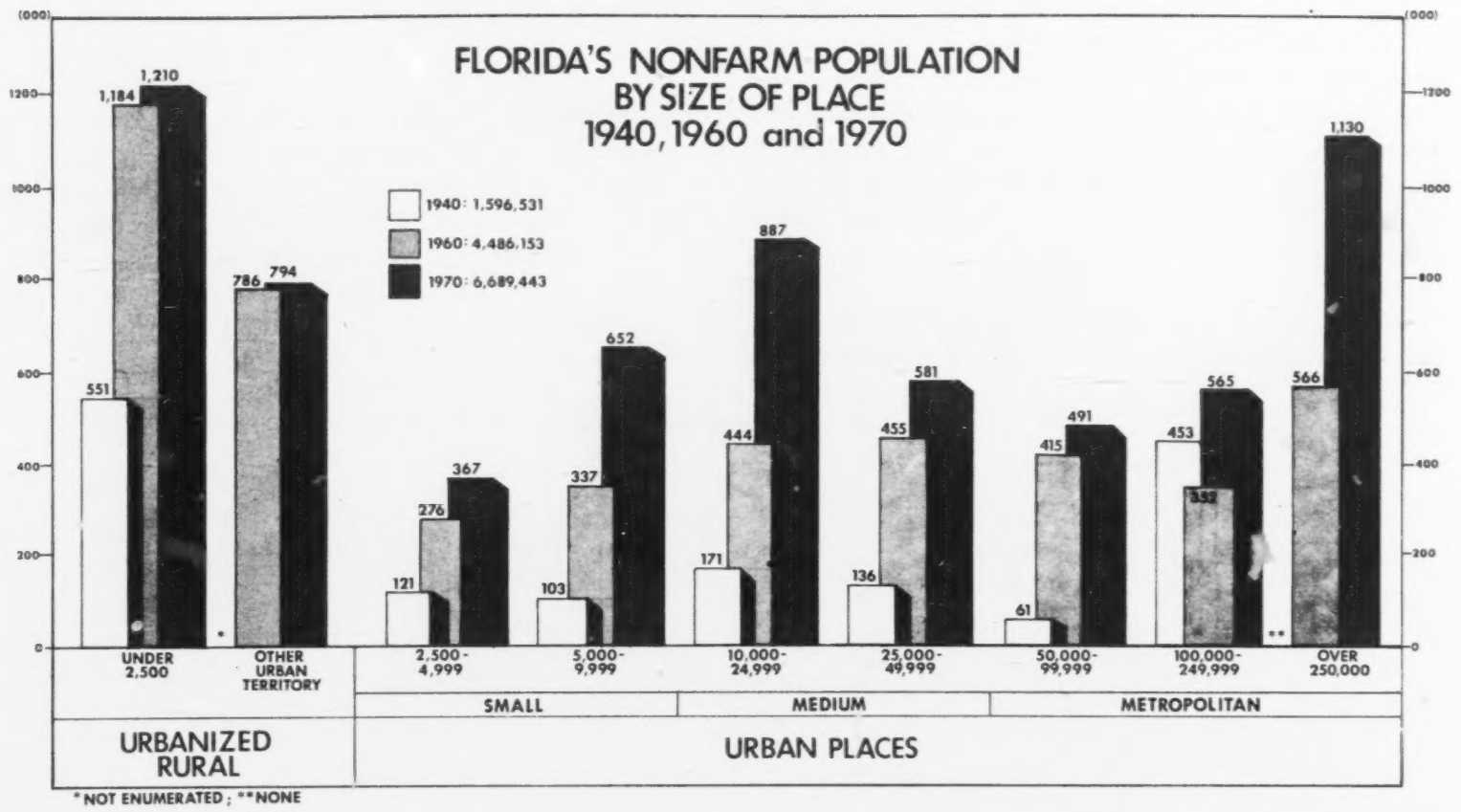
Size of Places	Percent Distribution 1940	1960	1970	Percent Change 1940–60	1960–70
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	142.0	37.1
500,000 and over			7.6		8.1
250,000 – 499,999		11.4	9.0		16.2
100,000 – 249,999	23.9	7.7	8.3	-15.7	47.8
50,000 – 99,999	3.2	8.4	7.2	582.2	18.4
25,000 – 49,999	7.2	9.2	8.6	234.8	27.7
10,000 – 24,999	9.0	9.0	13.1	159.0	99.9
5,000 – 9,999	5.4	6.8	9.6	225.5	93.5
2,500 – 4,999	6.4	5.6	5.4	129.0	32.7
Other Urban		15.8	11.7		1.1
1,000 – 2,499	4.9	3.0	2.5	57.6	17.1
Other Rural	24.1	20.9	15.5	126.9	1.1
Rural Farm	15.9	2.2	1.5*	-65.0	-5.1
*Estimated					
50,000 and over	27.1	27.5	32.1	165.1	60.4
10,000 and over	43.3	45.7	53.8	175.4	61.5
2,500 and over	55.1	58.1	68.8	175.0	62.5
Under 10,000	40.8	52.1	44.7	233.4	17.4
Urbanized Rural	29.0	39.7	29.7	257.4	2.3

In addition to the 65 new small places, another 44 towns achieved urban status (2,500 people) during the 1960–70 decade, and all but two of these had fewer than 10,000 people. Thirty-six places between 2,500 and 4,999 added 114,000 and six places of 5,000 to 9,999 added another 51,000. The importance of these 119 new places (103 with fewer than 10,000 persons) can be seen when their contribution to urban growth in Florida is compared with that of the metropolitan cities: 657,000 for the new places and 675,000 for the metropolitan areas.

Urbanized Rural Population

There is still another aspect of Florida's growth by size-of-place that often is overlooked. The Bureau of the Census uses "rural nonfarm" to classify persons not living

Figure 1



in urban places or on farms and, in 1950, the Bureau began to dip into this group and re-classify some of them as urban residents in "other urban territory" as part of the "urban fringe."

This sizeable portion of Florida's urbanized rural population consists of three segments: those in places under 2,500, those in other urban territory, and those in suburbs or open country but not on farms. Probably because of the growth of 44 towns that attained urban status in 1970, the population in places 1,000-2,499 and in other rural areas increased only 45,200 (1,970,400 to 2,015,600) since 1960. In 1940 there were less than 500,000 living in places with less than 1,000 persons. Thirty years later, this number had more than tripled to almost two million (1,843,000) and their way of life had so changed that the census classified 794,000 (40%) of them as urban residents, a factor that has considerable to do with the increase of the urban population from 55 percent in 1940 to the present 81 percent. But the fact remains that more than two million or so live in relatively small cities (under 10,000). This means Florida's population is almost evenly divided between those living in large cities over 10,000 in size (54%) and those in places under 10,000 (46%).

Implications

The persistence of the urbanized rural population to grow despite "raids" on it by larger places appears to warrant some attention from social planners. One trend of political import has been the use of annexation and consolidation to combat the "flight from the cities". As municipalities require a broader tax base and suburbanites require more of the services available only from municipalities, annexation has been more and more widely used. Unfortunately data for 1960–1970 have not been published but during the 1950–1960 decade the Dade County Metro government emerged, Tampa took in a large segment of Hillsborough County, and more than sixty other communities in the state expanded their territories to increase their population base through the legal device of annexation. During the past decade, Jacksonville grew from 201,000 to 518,000 mainly because of the consolidation of Jacksonville and Duval County which left only four small cities (Atlantic Beach, Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach and Baldwin) outside the new political unit. Tallahassee and Gainesville both gained metropolitan status during the '60's largely because of annexed territory.

As a consequence, in counties where suburban development has been extensive and resistance to annexation or consolidation has been strong, jurisdictional problems and disputes are likely to be imminent between municipal and county officials. Differences about the responsibility for providing services such as street-paving, schools and recreational facilities make planning extremely difficult and where undertaken it often grinds to a halt.

The continued growth of the urbanized rural areas with populations oriented to "city-ways" of living implies the need for more intensive and innovative planning efforts. If planning is to be at all effective, it will need to widen its scope to embrace more than city and urban areas. The time is not too far distant when, as we now zone for industrial activities, consideration will have to be given to zoning ordinances in rural farm areas.

Cognizance must be given to the precipitous decline of the farm population in Florida. From 300,000, the farm population of 1940 has plummented to an estimated 100,000 and this certainly will have economic consequences if it becomes necessary to "import" greater quantities of food to supplement the loss of farm products as farmland is turned into land development projects.

The wide disparity that once existed between urban and rural populations has all but disappeared. The persistent growth of population in urbanized rural areas in Florida points up a crucial issue of the social, economic and political interdependency of central cities and their hinterlands. Future planning programs necessarily must be concerned with the maintenance of some equitable balance between nonagricultural and agricultural activities and between man and his environment if problems associated with population growth and density are to be avoided such as diminishing food production, air pollution, inadequate water supply, urban ghettoes, and disappearing natural areas for recreation.

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